

9/4/69

GEORGE P. CONDAKES

It was with genuine regret that two months ago, I reluctantly made my decision to tender my resignation from the Boston Redevelopment Authority. Changing demands in my various business commitments have made it increasingly difficult for me to continue to discharge my duties as a member of this body in the assiduous manner I feel the position merits.

I have considered it an honor to have been afforded this opportunity to serve our City. It has been a most rewarding experience. I am hopeful I have made a meaningful contribution to our City in this sensitive position I have been privileged to hold. I have during my tenure as a member of this Board conscientiously attempted to fulfill my obligations and responsibilities in the exemplary manner of those who have come before me and who shall continue to serve, with honor, integrity and probity. I feel I have been truly privileged to serve on this Board at the side of a group of highly principled and responsible private citizens dedicatedly serving the public cause.

A great deal of the success of the Urban Renewal Program of the City of Boston is directly attributable to the selfless efforts of the three Board Members who have loyally served the Authority since its creation; Monsignor Francis J. Lally, Mr. James G. Colbert and Mr. Melvin J. Massucco.

Monsignor Lally, who has served the Authority as its Chairman since its inception, exemplifies all that a public servant ideally should be. His broad understanding of the full scope of urban renewal and its intrinsic interaction with the myriad factors ultimately influencing every aspect of the environment of the City

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has stood him in good stead in providing the leadership which has guided this Board in the positive course it has pursued in changing the face and the psychological climate of this City. As Editor of "The Pilot," Msgr. Lally has many demands upon his time and talents; however, in spite of this, he continues, and I pray shall continue, for many years to come, to serve our City in this capacity above and beyond the call of duty. It has been a pleasure and an honor to have served on the Board under this dedicated religious and civic leader.

As for our astute Treasurer, Mr. James G. Colbert, I feel I have known him since the days his political column appeared on the front page of the old Boston Post. There is certainly no more dedicated public servant than our esteemed treasurer. And, if he has been unjustly criticized for pouring over every financial transaction of the Authority with a fine-tooth comb, it is this very painstaking devotion to his exacting duties that has preserved the BRA free from even the slightest tinge of scandal. Only this type of exacting internal scrutiny can render any organization, public or private, secure in the knowledge that its house is in order and open to external scrutiny at any time. The BRA has truly been blessed to have been served in this particular capacity by so thorough and perceptive a man as Mr. Colbert.

The genial and capable Mr. Melvin J. Massucco, who has served the Board as Assistant Treasurer and now as its Vice Chairman, I personally shall always remember with nostalgia and gratitude when, with his characteristic warmth and understanding, he, as Picture Editor of the Daily Record, helped me, a newly released veteran, promote the cause of the American Legion immediately after the end of World War II. Despite several bouts with severe illness, Mr. Massucco has served the Authority with pride and zeal and has often placed the call of service and duty to the City above his own health.

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I truly feel there must come a time in the history of the BRA and of the City when the names of these three men shall be permanently recorded in some suitable manner at Government Center as great benefactors of the people of the City of Boston. It would only be fitting to point out to our fellow citizens that tremendous contributions can be made to the City by private citizens who have the interest of the City and their fellow citizens truly at heart.

I do not intend to slight our most recently appointed Board member, Mr. Patrick Bocanfuso. Though having served a comparatively short time on the Board, he has contributed most effectively to its workings and history will certainly record him as an able and conscientious member of this Authority.

I am most grateful to all my peers for their gracious understanding throughout my tenure of my inability to attend meetings earlier than at 2:30 in the afternoon. I wish to express my sincere appreciation for any sacrifice they have made of their time in cordially arranging to meet my schedule.

And it would certainly be less than gracious of me were I not to mention my deep and sincere appreciation to all members of the BRA staff and to all the employees for their cordiality and unstinting cooperation in complying immediately to all my not infrequent requests for materials, research and clerical assistance. I frankly doubt if any public or private enterprise anywhere is blessed with such dependable and dedicated employees.

My sincere thanks also to the members of the press for their unbiased and honest reporting of the activities and deliberations of this Authority.

At an appropriate time, I intend to release to you my own views and analysis of the BRA's past accomplishments and future potential written from the

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point of view of a member of Authority intimately involved with its inner workings as I was for five years. At this time, however, I consider it my duty to address a word of parting warning to my fellow Board members concerning the much trumpeted and widely discussed co-terminus appointment of Board members.

As far as I am concerned, the word "co-terminus" is merely a fancy sounding word in Webster's dictionary completely irrelevant to the sound and business-like functioning of this Authority, or of any private business organization. As I earlier pointed out to you, it is this Board which provides continuity and assures the overall impact and progress of redevelopment programs over the years and through the various changes we have undergone in the office of the Director. This Board has stood in good stead during the interim Directorship of the able Mr. Francis Cuddy. It certainly helped him in every way to sustain the impetus of the programs in progress. This Board also stood in good stead during the first year of our outgoing Director, the distinguished and capable Mr. Hale Champion, as he acquainted himself with the inner workings of the BRA and devised his own programs and organizational changes.

Through both these transitional periods, this dedicated Board has both supplied continuity and enabled the BRA to continue to function smoothly and effectively in spite of transition. It was this Board which was ultimately responsible for keeping intact the highly skilled and specialized staff our brilliant former Administrator, Mr. Edward J. Logue, had so painstakingly gathered about him-- a staff so necessary to the continuation and implementation of the work of the BRA. This continuity has guaranteed the success of our BRA programs.

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This very continuity will also stand in good stead in the immediate future as Mr. John D. Warner, our newly appointed Director, assumes his duties and familiarizes himself with his enormous task.

I shudder to think where the Urban Renewal Authority or the Urban Renewal Program itself would be today if at the beginning of 1968 we had had both a newly appointed Director and a newly appointed Board.

My sole reason for making these remarks about co-terminus appointments and their effect on the Authority is that should the issue ever arise, the facts should be presented concerning the damage which could be caused not only to this Authority but to any organization or business which is deprived of a certain degree of continuity.

I thank you for your kind attention. It has been my honor to have served among you.

GPC/M
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